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Upcoming Events

Jyoti Yatra: Welcoming of Chinmaya Jyoti	Jan 31	12:00 pm - 1:15 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Art Exhibition	Jan 31 - Feb 27	
Jyoti Yatra: Daily Guru Paduka Puja Call Rekha Acharya @ 714-749-0998 to schedule a slot	Jan 31 - Feb 27	Timings vary
Jyoti Yatra: Sanatan Dharma Temple Visit, Northwalk	Feb 6	4:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Malibu Temple Visit, Calabasas	Feb 7	2:30 pm - 3:30 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Valley Hindu Temple Visit, Northridge	Feb 7	4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
Jyoti Yatra: 'On A Quest' Movie Screening	Feb 13	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Just for Seniors - For ages 55+	Feb 18	9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Sri Lakshmi Narayan Temple Visit, Riverside	Feb 14	10:00 am - 11:00 am
Jyoti Yatra: Siddhivinayak Temple Visit, Brea	Feb 14	2:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Interfaith Dialogue	Feb 20	4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Sri Panchamukha Hanuman Temple Visit, Torrance	Feb 21	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Geeta Inana Yagna by Pujia Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji	Feb 20-26	7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Meditation Workshop & Interactive Session by Swami Ishwarananda	Feb 27	10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Samashti Bhiksha	Feb 27	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Sivan Temple Visit, Pasadena	Feb 27	2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Deeply Divine' Music Concert (Kalanjali presentation)	Feb 27	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Jyoti Yatra: Chinmaya Jyoti leaves for San Diego	Feb 28	08:00 am
Valmiki Ramayana Discourse Series by Swami Ishwarananda	Feb 29 - Mar 4	6:30 am - 7:30 am 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Bhagavad Gita Discourse Series by Swami Ishwarananda	Every Sunday	9:00 am - 10:15 am 12:00 pm - 1:15 pm
Bhaja Govindam Discourse Series by Acharya Mahadevan	Every Sunday	9:00 am - 10:15 am 12:00 pm - 1:15 pm
Guided Vedic Chanting by Swami Ishwarananda	Every Saturday	6:30 am - 7:30 am

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Thus Spake The Master

Develop noble and enduring qualities. Watch in others for weaknesses, which you should guard against in yourself. Love all. Serve all.

- Swami Chinmayananda

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Words Of The Wise

One who is attached to worldly objects or beings (who are themselves attached), finds that the attachment and bondage only increase. But one who attaches himself to the detached loses all worldly attachment, and finally even the attachment to the detached.

- Swami Tejomayananda

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THINK!

*Highest is that which is beyond any language
Known with eyes of immaculate knowledge
Without any beginning is Pure mass of awareness
Meditate ever within as Thy own Consciousness
Says Shankara, nature of the soul is stillness
Discovered through realization of Its fullness
Knowledge begins in following Guru's every word
Culminates in silence, nothing more to be heard
All that is spoken and all that will be spoken
Play of the mind with deep stillness broken
Seek quiet moments, without a single thought
For, wisdom is caught and never is taught!*

- Swami Ishwarananda

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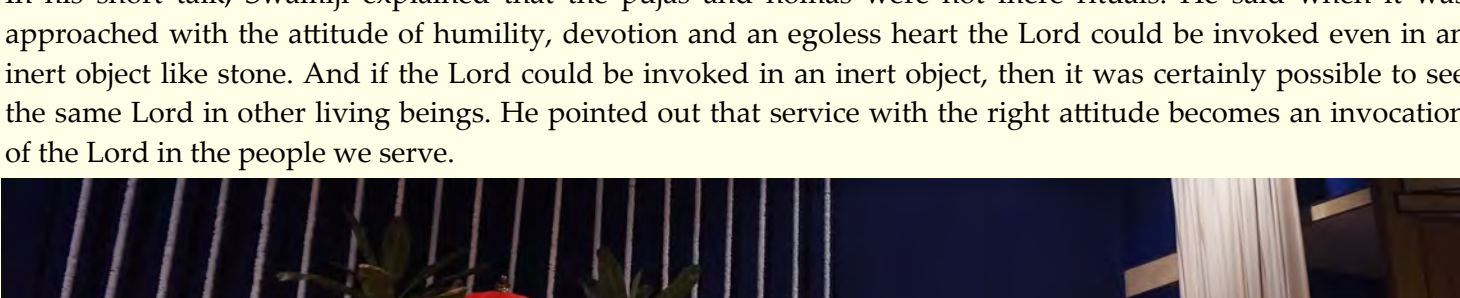
Chinmaya Rameshwaram Turns Six

The sixth anniversary of Chinmaya Rameshwaram was celebrated in a grand manner on Jan. 16.

It began with the Ganesh homa and the worship of the gods and the navagrahas to seek their blessings. The homas were led by Pandit Sivaramakrishnan of the Sanatan Dharma temple. On its conclusion and to the accompaniment of joyous Chendamel music, Acharya Mahadevanji brought in Gurudev's padukas with honor and pomp to the altar set up in the auditorium.



Under Swami Ishwarananda's guidance, balavihar children proceeded to perform the Guru Paduka puja and touched the hearts of all present with their sincerity and devotion. Swamiji not only lauded the children but also appreciated their parents for cultivating in their children good spiritual habits.



In his short talk, Swamiji explained that the pujas and homas were not mere rituals. He said when it was approached with the attitude of humility, devotion and an egoless heart the Lord could be invoked even in an inert object like stone. And if the Lord could be invoked in an inert object, then it was certainly possible to see the same Lord in other living beings. He pointed out that service with the right attitude becomes an invocation of the Lord in the people we serve.

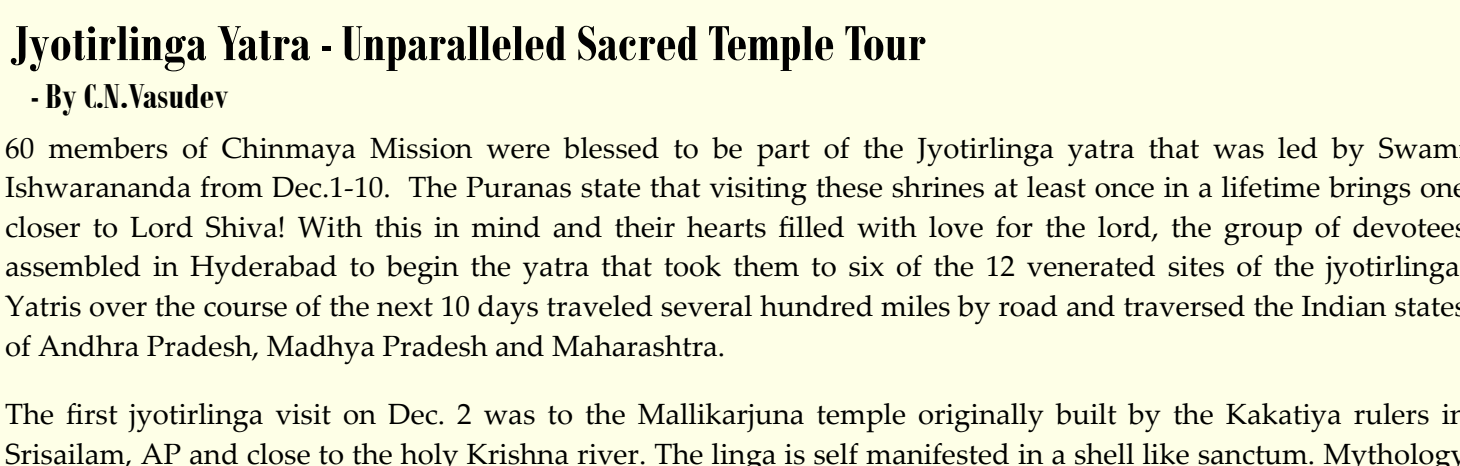


Bhajans by the children of Chinmaya Shruthi and the adult Swaranjali group followed. After the arati, the celebrations ended with distribution of mahaprasad.

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CMLA's Shruti Aiyar Shines in International Geeta Yagna

Shruti Aiyar, after winning in the U.S. national contest in Chicago (see Patrika, Sept. 2015), repeated her triumph at the international level, coming in second in Group C. The competition saw children from around the globe participate in the learning, memorizing, understanding and chanting of the holy verses.



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Jyotirlinga Yatra - Unparalleled Sacred Temple Tour

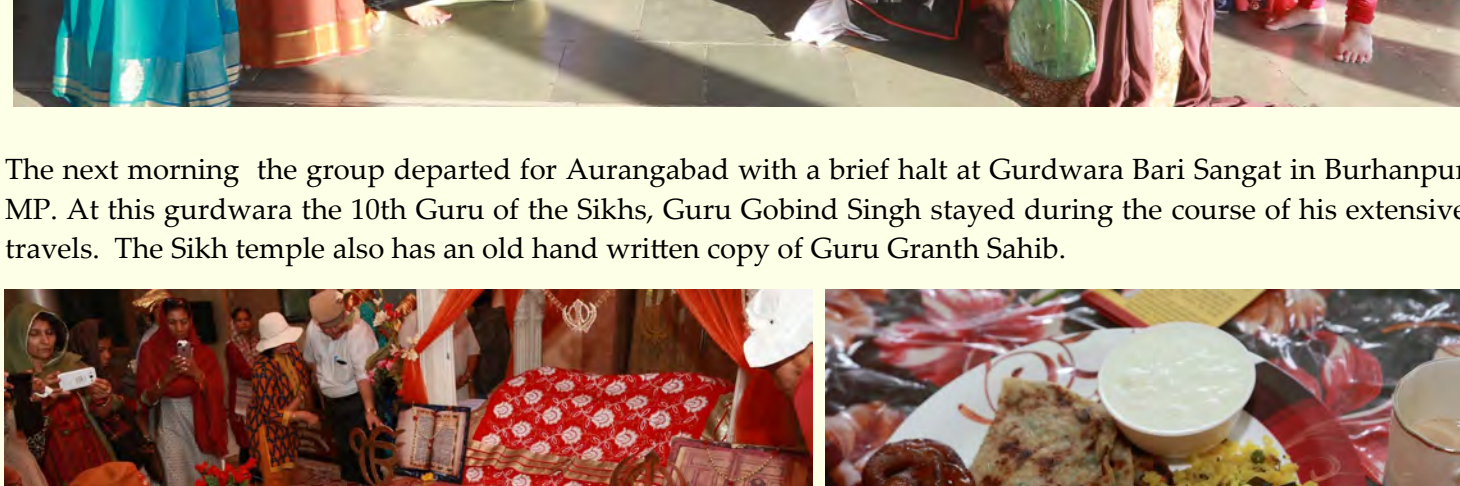
- By CA Vasudev

60 members of Chinmaya Mission were blessed to be part of the Jyotirlinga yatra that was led by Swami Ishwarananda from Dec. 1-10. The Puranas state that visiting these shrines at least once in a lifetime brings one closer to Lord Shiva! With this in mind and their hearts filled with love for the lord, the group of devotees assembled in Hyderabad to begin the yatra that took them to six of the 12 venerated sites of the jyotirlinga. Yatris over the course of the next 10 days traveled several hundred miles by road and traversed the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

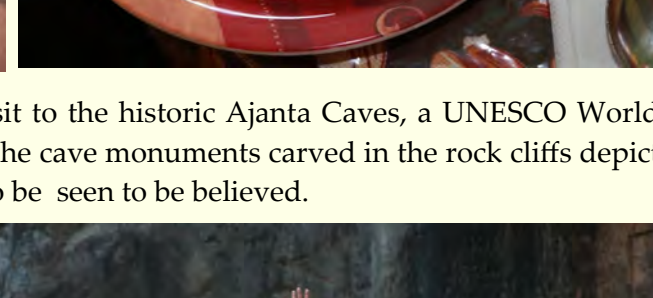
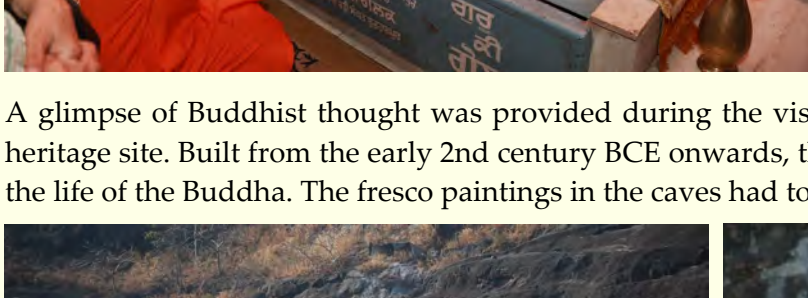
The first jyotirlinga visit on Dec. 2 was to the Mallikarjuna temple originally built by the Kakatiya rulers in Srisailem, AP and close to the holy Krishna river. The linga is self manifested in a shell like sanctum. Mythology has it that Sri Rama and the Pandavas worshipped Mahadeva here during their forest sojourn. The present temple was built by Krishnadevaraya of the Vijayanagar dynasty. After sight seeing the next day and visiting the historic Golconda fort of the Qutub Shahi dynasty (14th to 16th century AD) yatris left for Mahakaleshwar in Ujjain.

On Dec. 3, the unique opportunity of doing the linga abhishekam and witnessing the bhasma arati here between 2 AM and 4 AM was enjoyed by all the pilgrims. The latter was done with vibhuti and everyone was struck by the beauty of the ritual. Located on the banks of the Kshipra river, the temple is built on 5 levels. The Mahakal shrine is in the lowest level followed by the Omkareshwar shrine and the Nagachandreshwara shrine.

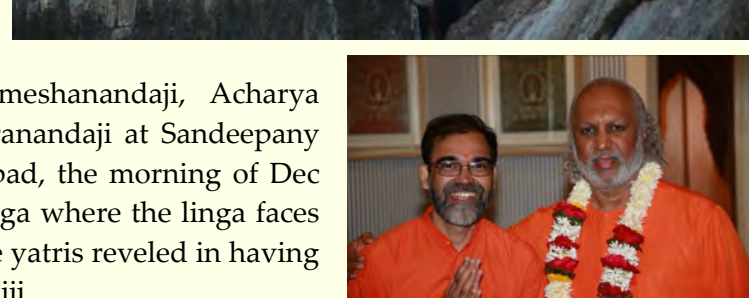
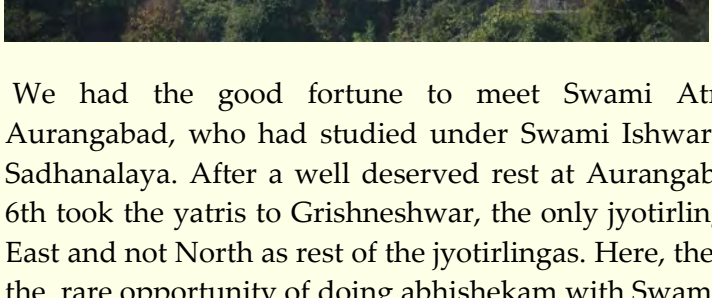
Omkareshwar was the next stop in the middle of the Narmada river on Mandhata island. This jyotirlinga temple is a combination of 2 shrines, Omkareshwar and Mammleshwar with the linga located in the Mammleshwar shrine. The Narmada river presented a serene ambience further enhanced by Swamiji leading the chanting of Lingashtakam followed by satsang.



The next morning the group departed for Aurangabad with a brief halt at Gurdwara Bari Sangat in Burhanpur MP. At this gurdwara the 10th Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh stayed during the course of his extensive travels. The Sikh temple also has an old hand written copy of Guru Granth Sahib.



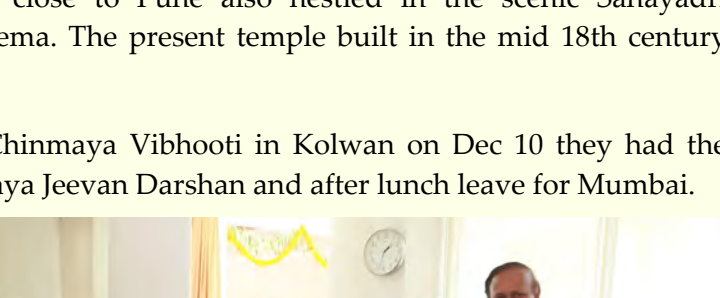
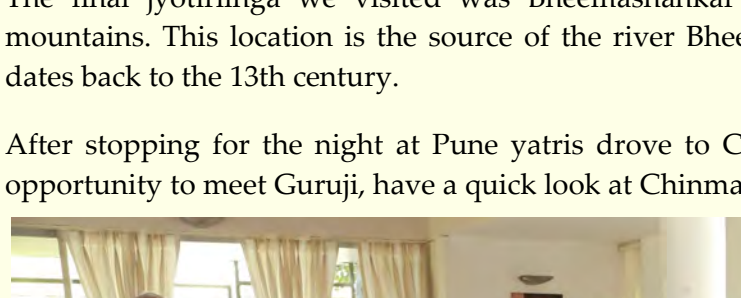
A glimpse of Buddhist thought was provided during the visit to the historic Ajanta Caves, a UNESCO World heritage site. Built from the early 2nd century BCE onwards, the cave monuments carved in the rock cliffs depict the life of the Buddha. The fresco paintings in the caves had to be seen to be believed.



We had the good fortune to meet Swami Atmashanandaji, Acharya Aurangabad, who had studied under Swami Ishwaranandaji at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya. After a well deserved rest at Aurangabad, the morning of Dec 6th took the yatris to Rameshwaram, the only jyotirlinga where the linga faces East and not North as rest of the jyotirlingas. Here, the yatris revelled in having the rare opportunity of doing abhishekam with Swamiji.



The next stop was the Ellora Caves, another UNESCO world heritage site and has rock cut caves of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain heritage. The Rashtrakuta dynasty built these caves cut in the Charanandri hills. The Vishwakarma cave in the most spectacular with a 10 ft tall Avalokiteshwara Buddha seated in the teaching posture. However the unrivaled masterpiece of Ellora is the Kailash temple. Though this shrine looks like a free standing multi storey temple, in reality it is carved out of one single rock. The temple with Shaivite and Vaishnavite deities carved around the prakara, highlighted by Ravana attempting to lift Mt. Kailash, complete the temple. It took about a hundred years to build and saw the removal of 200,000 tons of rock. An architectural wonder!



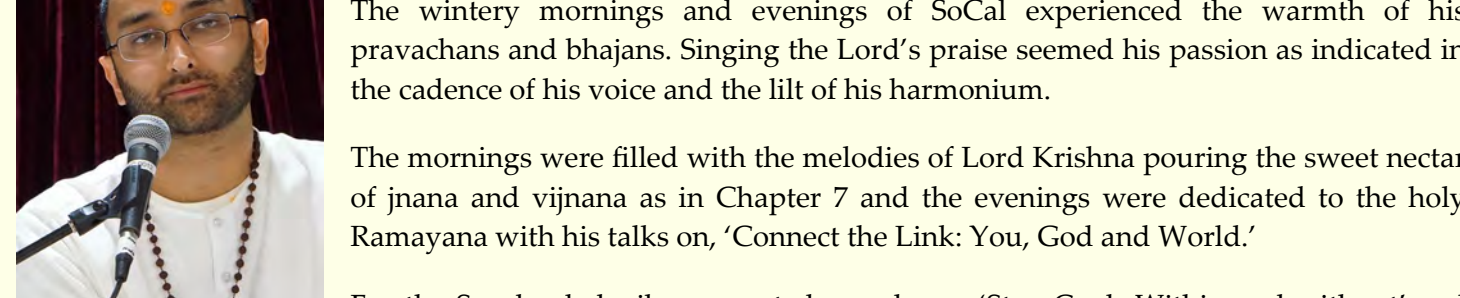
The trip continued the next morning with the first stop at the Deogiri also known as Daulatabad fort. Built around 1187 it was the seat of the Yadav dynasty and later taken over by Mohd bin Tughlak and renamed Tughlakabad. Built on a pyramid shaped mountain with sheer slopes, the fort had intricate pathways where the enemy could be trapped. It had 7 walls and 20 gates.

The Shirdi temple in Maharashtra was constructed in 1922 over the samadhi of Sai Baba and has the reverence of both Hindu and Muslim followers.

After yatris paid their homage here, they continued on to Tryambakeshwar, the 10th of the 12 jyotirlingas, in the Sahayadri mountains. It is here that the source of the Godavari river is, and the temple is set in very scenic surroundings. The present temple was built during the reign of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao. The linga in the sanctum is not a traditional linga but three small lingas embodying Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara.

The final jyotirlinga we visited was Bheemashankar close to Pune also nestled in the scenic Sahayadri mountains. This location is the source of the river Bhema. The present temple built in the mid 18th century dates back to the 13th century.

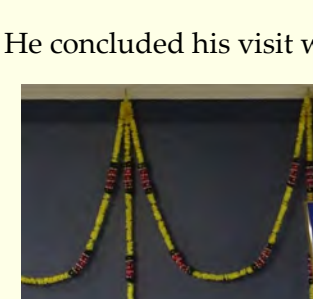
After stopping for the night at Pune yatris drove to Chinmaya Vibhooti in Kolwan on Dec 10 they had the opportunity to meet Guruji, have a quick look at Chinmaya Jeevan Darshan and after lunch leave for Mumbai.



For all the yatris, the pilgrimage was an unforgettable one with outstanding darshans and satsangs by Swamiji.

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Acharya Arun Gossai Captures Hearts



CMLA members experienced a whiff of freshness from Dec. 5-14, as they enjoyed the visit of Acharya Arun Gossaiji of Chinmaya Mission, New York.

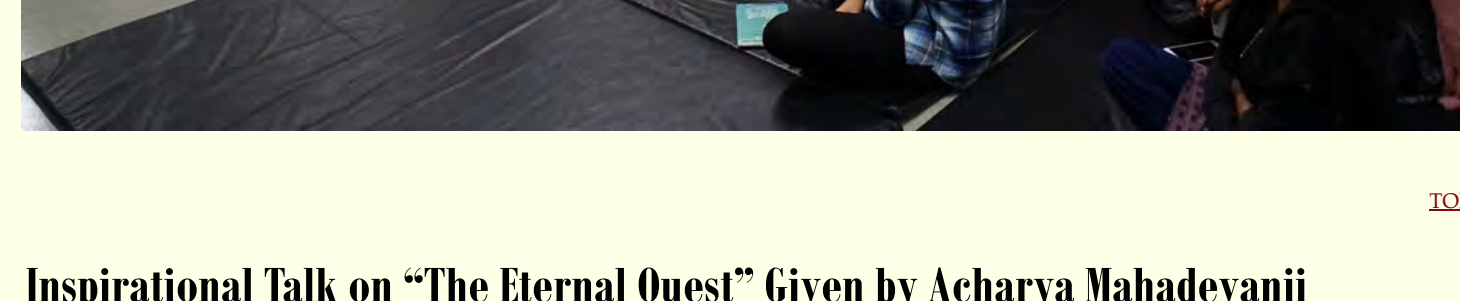
The wintry mornings and evenings of SoCal experienced the warmth of his pravachans and bhajans. Singing the Lord's praise seemed his passion as indicated in the cadence of his voice and the lilt of his harmonium.

The mornings were filled with the melodies of Lord Krishna pouring the sweet nectar of jnana and vijana as in Chapter 7 and the evenings were dedicated to the holy Ramayana with his talks on, 'Connect the Link: You, God and World.'

For the Sunday balavihar parents he spoke on 'Stay Cool- Within and without' and 'The Power of Now.'

His friendly demeanor and casual conversation style made him an instant hit with the youth too. On Dec. 12, he had a Q&A session where he addressed topics ranging from meditation, to maya to relationships. On dating, he addressed the teens with equanimity, acknowledged the power of hormones at age 17-20 and then quickly brought them back to the importance of having a goal in life; the duties as per brahmacharya ashrama and the importance of an integrated mind and intellect.

He concluded his visit with a bhajan sandhya on Dec. 13.



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Inspirational Talk on "The Eternal Quest" Given by Acharya Mahadevanji

Acharya Mahadevanji delivered an inspirational talk on the topic of "The Eternal Quest - What is it? Can we get there and how?" on Jan. 23. The answer he said, was to find our True Self and detailed six steps which can be used to attain this.

Heeding the higher call and keeping the goal in mind is the first step. Mahadevanji used shlokas from the Vivekachudamani to indicate that human birth is a great gift which should drive one to the goal of seeking the true self. He provided the examples of Saint Tulsidas and maharishi Valmiki on their transformations.

He said keeping faith in the goal and in one's ability to reach there; overcoming the external challenges; invoking the grace of the Guru; conscious living which helps in not making mistakes and understanding little successes which provide confidence are among the things that need to be paid heed to while on this quest.

Mahadevanji said when the goal is attained one becomes the beacon of light for everyone to follow.



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Please send articles and pictures for publication to Nimmi Raj at nimmicmla@gmail.com

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